Development and propagation of Indian culture

452. SHRI SHAHID SIDDIQUI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether theatre has traditionally played a very significant role in development and propagation of Indian culture;

(b) the steps taken for the growth of traditional Indian Folk Theatres; and

(c) whether there is a plan to revive and bring these theatres on the pattern of modern day city life of the country?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Under the scheme of financial assistance to cultural institutions, grants are given to institutions and groups practising traditional Indian folk theatres; festivals and performances are held regularly; several artists in the field have been honoured with Sangeet Natak Akademi Awards. Audio-Video recordings of many forms have been made. A special project is being run for the preservation and development of Koodiyattam, a significant tradition of Indian theatre. Under the scheme of 'Assistance to Young Theatre Workers', the Sangeet Natak Akademi has funded several contemporary plays based on traditional theatres. Programmes for promotion of traditional folk theatres are organised in collaboration with Zonal Cultural Centres (ZCCs) all over India. The ZCCs have introduced a new scheme of Theatre Rejuvenation and for the last three years, assistance of Rs. 5.50 lakhs per annum is being provided to each of the seven Centres. The ZCCs are also organising festivals of Traditional Folk Theatres. Moreover, under the Guru Shishya Parampara Scheme, fully funded by Government of India, Traditional Indian Folk Theatres are being revived alongwith other folk forms.

Most of above mentioned efforts are then also showcased in towns and cities.

Development of heritage sites

453. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the heritage sites developed during 2004-05 by the National Culture Fund along with funds allocated therefor;

(b) the details of heritage sites proposed to be developed during the year 2005-06 through foreign assistance particularly in Tamil Nadu; and

(c) the funds received by Government from foreign countries and international agencies for the development of these sites?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) The work relating to Jaisalmer Fort at an estimated cost of Rs. 600.00 lakhs (in collaboration with World Monument Fund), Taj Mahal at an estimated cost of 157.00 lakhs (in collaboration with Indian Hotels Ltd.), Jantar Mantar at an estimated cost of 104.00 lakhs (in collaboration with Park Hotel), etc. were under development in the period under reference.

(b) Works on the above mentioned sites are being continued in 2005-06. Besides, Lodhi Garden Tomb in collaboration with Steel Authority of India Limited and Safdarjung Tomb using the interest accrued on the investment of the corpus fund of the NCF are proposed to be undertaken in the current year. In so far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, there is no proposal for any foreign assistance for development of heritage sites at present.

(c) Foreign funding is limited to Jaisalmer Fort for which World Monument Fund had contributed an amount equivalent to Rs. 599.00 lakhs

Kannada as classical language

454. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Sanskrit has been accorded the status of classical language;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that Kannada language has the history of 1600 years;

(c) whether the State Government has requested to accord classical language status of Kannada language; and

(d) if so, the status of the above proposal?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Committee of Linguistic Experts constituted for the purpose will look into the matter.